

09/09/2000

Facilities can match the best, says expert

CYBERJAYA, Fri. - State-of-the-art facilities and lower cost are the main selling points of E-Village, the country's "Universal Studios" which is targeting international film-makers.

Pollard Productions managing director James Ring said the facilities, including the 200 square metres Sound Stage Studio in E-Village, was of international standards.

Ring said the studio, the largest in Asia, was very suitable as movies now usually needed big studios, especially if it involved sophisticated side-effects.

"Another factor is cost. Compared to other studios, the cost here is much cheaper," said Ring, whose company is one of the consultants to the E-Village.

He added that the producers of the Academy Award-winning Matrix was filmed entirely in Australia as the cost there was cheaper than Hollywood and E-Village could take advantage of its lower rental rates.

"When Matrix was shot in Australia, all major studios and even warehouses there were fully-booked. It practically brought Australia's film industry to a temporary standstill.

"E-Village can position itself and capture a segment of the market," Ring added.

Asked if E-Village could turn the country into a film-making hub like Hollywood or Bollywood, Ring said it would help lift the standards of film-making in Malaysia.

The Studio Precinct, comprises the Sound Stage Studio - said to be taller than the one at the recently-opened Fox Studio complex in Australia - and a virtual studio.

The virtual studio will have 3D-animation, special effects and post-production facilities for digital content creation.

Theme parks and recreations of popular Asian towns as well as a mini island will also be built. The whole project is expected to cost RM3 billion.

E-Village is a joint venture between Entertainment Village (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd and British Aerospace president Steve Grace. The Malaysian company holds a 70 per cent stake.

Yesterday, a media preview was held of the performances that will be staged at the launch tonight of the Sound Stage Studio by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

(END)